

Section *Thalassohelix*, hitherto not recorded from beyond New Zealand. There is no doubt that *H. fordei* Brazier, (*=petterdi* Cox *=positura* Cox) must be classed under this section, and very likely also *H. austrinus* Cox, *H. allporti* Cox, *H. helice* Cox, *H. medianus* Cox, *H. mixta* Cox, *H. tabescens* Cox, *H. tranquilla* Cox, *H. trajectura* Cox, which are said to be varieties of *H. fordei*. This species is found also in Australia.

Genus *Laoma*.

Section *Phrixgnathus*, a genus which was thought to be peculiar to New Zealand "par excellence." Now I am quite sure that the following Tasmanian mollusks belong to this section:

*H. cæsus* Cox (and var. *occultus* Cox?) *H. henryana* Petterd, and *H. pictilis* Tate; the latter being found also in Australia.

Genus *Rhenea*.<sup>1</sup>

This genus of which two species are known from New Zealand, is in Tasmania represented by *Hyalina nelsonensis* Brazier (*=fulgetrum* Cox, and very likely *H. dyeri* Petterd, though the dentition of the latter is unknown to me).

I am confident that on examining my slides there will be some other sections of *Gerontia* to be placed on record in my next communication on Tasmanian snails.

In future we may no doubt be able to distinguish in New Zealand and Tasmania two different immigrations of land mollusca, one having spread from north southward, and another, the *antarctic*, migrating from south to north.

Springfield Road, Christ Church, New Zealand, Sept. 6, 1893.

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SOME (RESPONSIVE) REMARKS RELATIVE TO CYPRÆA GREGORI  
FORD.

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BY JOHN FORD.

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In the note on *Cypræa Gregori* Ford, published in the October number of the NAUTILUS, the writer, Mr. Edgar A. Smith, of London, rather forcibly remarks that "the new French School of Conchologists would probably agree with Mr. Ford in considering the shell in question specifically distinct from *C. cruenta*," but, "he

<sup>1</sup>A genus of carnivorous, jawless snails allied to *Rhytida* and *Paryphanta*, formerly called *Elæa* Hutt. (preoc.)—Ed.

was glad to say that in England (and, he hoped, in America also), the ideas were not so far advanced (?).” In support of the last proposition, he says: “Although examples of this shell have been in the National (British) collection for more than fifty years, no British author has ever suggested that they belonged to a distinct species.” This statement is apparently correct, but he might have added quite as truly, that nearly all of these years were required for “British authors” to find them worthy even of varietal distinction.

In view of this “state of things,” it is not at all surprising that Mr. Smith should consider it a “bit of presumption” for an American student, having less than one year’s knowledge of the shells, to attempt to lift them above the plane of varietal controversy.

It matters not that this student has examined hundreds of specimens, all showing the same distinctive specific characters. His “ideas” do not agree with English formulas, therefore they must necessarily be too far advanced.

Nevertheless, the new species, *C. Gregori*, has doubtless come to stay, since it has been endorsed already by quite a number of eminent (American) Conchologists, whose opinions, were it necessary to mention names, would at once be accepted as weighty. In regard to Mr. Smith’s admission, “that *examples* are pretty easily separated from the *typical* form of *cruenta*,” it may be said that I have seen no specimens whatever that could not be separated on sight from *any* form of *C. cruenta*. Just here, it may also be said, that I do not hesitate to claim (as in my former article) priority both for the name and description of the shell; and this claim is made in face of the fact that British authors, as a rule, command my highest respect and esteem. But while according this, I do not expect them to throttle, without ample reason, even the humblest seeker after knowledge.

It is only just to myself to say that not until my first description was in type, did I learn that Mr. Melvill had ever referred to the shells, nor, so far as I could ascertain, was this reference known to any of my Conchological friends. Indeed, the gentleman who finally gave me the information has, from the first, regarded them as *C. caurica* var. As Mr. Smith suggests, I was then, and still am, under the impression that Mr. Melvill’s sentences left the reader in a state of uncertainty as to whether he considered the shells a

variety of *cruenta* or of *caurica*. That his purpose is more plainly shown in the list of figures given is apparent, but as the volume examined by me was an uncut one, this list was not at the time discovered.

Since many readers of the NAUTILUS may lack the opportunity of seeing Mr. Melvill's statement, and judging for themselves as to its clearness, it is given here *verbatim*, as follows: "*C. cruenta* (Gmel.) is very nearly allied to the preceding," [i. e. *caurica*] "and the variety *coloba* (fig. 7), so-called from the stunted appearance, is also figured in Sowb. Thes. f. 190, as *caurica* var.; it would appear nearer this species: the base is always brighter coloured, and teeth interstices bright red. I possess stunted *caurica* with which this var. cannot be mistaken."

Now if any reader of the NAUTILUS can show by these sentences to which of the two species Mr. Melvill assigned the variety, it will be a pleasure for me to acknowledge my error in questioning his meaning. But whether the language refers to one variety or another is really of very little moment at this time, since it can in no way affect the present status of the shells. Be it agreeable to Mr. Smith or not, the fact remains that Mr. Melvill's so-called description is simply meaningless and void, embracing as it does, just three words, viz, "base brighter colored," meaning, of course, brighter colored than the type shells he had in mind.

But how brighter or how colored? They are certainly *not* brighter than both *cruenta* and *caurica* usually are; and there is not a hint as to whether the *color* is green, blue, yellow or any one of a dozen hues, yet with such a description at hand, the student was expected to distinguish the shells from all others. It is true that there are other words besides the three quoted, viz, "teeth interstices bright red." Unfortunately, however, the same sentence is used in the description of the type *C. cruenta*, (to which species Mr. Smith assures us the variety *coloba* relates) and is therefore entirely worthless as a distinctive *varietal* character.

For these reasons, I claim that the name *coloba* is absolutely devoid of collateral support, since nothing can be plainer than the fact that without an accompanying description intelligible enough for comprehension, the suggested name or title of a shell is of no scientific value whatever.

But then, as Mr. Smith intimates, there is the figure! and surely that counts for *something*.

Perhaps it does. But not for anything of special importance in this connection, for Kiener, many years before, gave us a *pair* of figures quite as good; not to mention that made by Sowerby some years later.

It should be understood that these references are not made in defence of the present specific standing of the shells, but mainly in deference to those readers who may have missed seeing my former articles relating to them. The species, i. e., *C. Gregori*, is doubtless already sufficiently fortified to prevent successful assaults from any quarter.

In conclusion, it might be well to add, that Mr. Smith's rather emphatic "reminder" of my lack of courtesy, is wholly gratuitous, and therefore does not call for comment.

In the interest of peace, however, it is accepted "with thanks," and filed for future courteous consideration.

Philadelphia, October, 1893.

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#### THE SHEEPSCOTE RIVER.

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BY REV. HENRY W. WINKLEY.

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The fauna of the eastern coast of New England, aside from the species which characterize it as a whole, has a number of small areas where the oyster, quahog and other southern forms exist. The most conspicuous of these areas is Northumberland Straits, where the oyster is abundant enough to be of commercial value. Other points, where the Virginian fauna occurs, are a few sheltered spots on the east coast of Nova Scotia, in Minas Basin, Casco Bay and Massachusetts Bay, with a few outliers of less importance.

These spots on the coast are widely separated from each other, and have in the near neighborhood animals which are adapted to the colder waters. Some few years ago the present writer published a list of thirty species found in Northumberland Straits.<sup>1</sup> The present summer was spent in Wiscasset, Maine; this and a visit to that place three years ago enabled me to dredge in many places in the Sheepscote River.

Wiscasset is ten or twelve miles from the sea and the river is practically a salt water bay or fjord. Its depth is ten fathoms in

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<sup>1</sup> Bulletin VII—Nat. Hist. Soc. of New Brunswick.